



**Connecticut Association of Assessing Officers, Inc.**  
**Legislative Committee**

**David M. Dietsch, CCMA II**  
**John Chaponis, CCMA II**

***Testimony in opposition of RHB No 5312.***

March 5, 2018

Dear members of the Transportation Committee,

The Connecticut Association of Assessing Officers urges you to **oppose Sec. 20 of HB 5312 AAC RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES REGARDING MOTOR VEHICLE STATUTES.**

CAAO understands that most of HB 5312 consists of technical changes the Department of Motor Vehicles is recommending for the clarification of existing statutes and to help the department run more effectively and efficiently. **We are only troubled by Sec. 20, which would repeal and replace CGS 12-71b.** Specifically because that section is attempting to repeal subsection (h), which was brand new legislation that passed last year as part of PA 17-2 (Sec. 556).

For several years now, Connecticut municipalities have been pleading for help to combat the growing problem of residents registering their motor vehicles out of state to avoid taxes. The problem had become so pervasive, that it was highlighted by Len Bestoff in a 3 part series on NBC news. Senator Maclachlan, who was witnessing the problem first hand in Danbury, proposed the only solution offered so far. PA 17-2 required DMV to supply the assessor with the owner's name, mailing address and vehicle information when that assessor has identified on out of state plate on a vehicle that is subject to tax in Connecticut.

Twenty years ago, PA 17-2 would have been unnecessary because the Connecticut DMV had an office entitled "Registration Compliance" that investigated out of state plates that were in Connecticut beyond the 60 day legal grace period allowed when a person moves in to Connecticut. A letter would go to the registered owner, and copied to the assessor. That letter would have all the information an assessor needed to identify the owner and vehicle to properly assess it. At the same time, if the assessor found the vehicle first, they could alert Registration Compliance to obtain the owner/vehicle information as well as for DMV to begin enforcement.

CAAO believes that PA 17-2 is a win/win because the State and municipalities are both losing revenue on this serious problem that continues to mushroom. The State is losing money on registration renewals while the municipalities are losing local taxes. Most importantly is how unfair this situation is to those Connecticut residents who are paying taxes in Connecticut and must pay a greater tax to cover those who are evading taxation.

Please do not take away our only access to these records without offering an alternative solution.

Respectfully,

Legislative Chairmen, Connecticut Association of Assessing Officers  
David Dietsch & John Chaponis